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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The editor is not responsible for opinions expressed in this department. All communications must be accompanied by the name and address of the writer.

THE SEATING OF AN AUDIENCE

DEAR EDITOR: Not long ago, while in conversation with one who frequently speaks in public, comment was made about the relation of audiences to speakers, and particularly in reference to the manner in which an audience may be seated, and it occurs to me that some of the ideas may well be called to the attention of nurses. It was my privilege to attend the convention in New Orleans and I was much impressed by the prompt manner in which front seats were always filled, showing so plainly the desire of those present to really hear what was said.

Of course, when there is a capacity audience, all one can do is to accept conditions, whatever they may be, but often the room or hall is much too large for the audience, which, if it be scattered is one most difficult to address. The necessity for raising the voice, keeping it raised in order that those in the rear may hear, and turning the head frequently to try and include those seated at the sides—and sometimes even behind the speaker—should be obviated whenever possible by the audience being seated in a compact body at the front. Therefore, the room selected should be as near the size required for the expected audience as can be determined; it should be ventilated and free from drafts, which might detract attention from the speaker, and the temperature should be given due consideration. To avoid the confusion caused by late comers, the entrance should be back of the audience. For the comfort of the speaker, a chair, sufficient light, and a table or stand on which papers may be placed, should be provided.

Many times, dignity would be added to the occasion if the one who introduces the speaker, something, by the way, which should never be omitted, would sit facing the audience, and near by.

It is possible that even though all these details have received attention, an audience may feel at liberty to sit where it pleases, but many times an usher may be able to see that the front seats are occupied.

As I write this it all seems so simple as to be unworthy of space, but I can assure you that more than once I have known both audience and speaker to be uncomfortable through neglect of these arrangements.

Ohio.

G. A.

AN EMERGENCY CASE

DEAR EDITOR: The case of which I wish to tell you was at Glyndon, Minnesota, several miles out of town, where the prairie meets the horizon in every direction. The attending physician met me with his auto in Fargo, and while going to the home the doctor was preparing me for what I was going to get into, but to the worst things he would mention, I always said, "I don't mind."

We arrived at the home about 8.30 p.m. and had to enter by way of the kitchen, as the other outside doors are usually stuffed with rags in the winter to keep out the blessed and wonderful fresh air. The family was sitting in the kitchen, rather, a combination of living room, dining room and kitchen. Such gloom and dismal atmosphere I hope never to come in contact with again. The first words that reached our ears were, 'Our little Edith is dead.'